

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING****Monday, February 10, 2003**

Present: June Bailey, Colleen Craig, Glen Dey, Janet Miller, M.S. Mitchell, Trix Niernberger, Joe Todd

Also Present: Mike North, Law Department; Kay Johnson, City Environmental Coordinator; Bob Gress, Harold Hughey, Doug Kupper, Tim Martz, Thane Rogers, Neil Vyff, and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 13, 2003, were reviewed and approved with several minor revisions to items 4, 5, and 8. The minutes of the Special Meeting of January 27, 2003, were reviewed and approved as submitted.

1. **Discussion /Approval of C & D Landfill Correspondence.** President Bailey referred board members to a rough draft of correspondence addressed to the City Council RE: Cornejo & Sons, Inc., C & D Landfill, Permit No. 0773 and support of their extension to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Board members briefly reviewed the correspondence.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Todd, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the correspondence be forwarded to the City Council as a recommendation.

2. **Chemical-Free Parks.** Trix Niernberger referred board members to materials that were mailed with the agenda; namely: pesticide use policy, pesticide draft sign rev., pesticide native plants rev., pesticide studies, and pesticide bibliography. She asked the Board to adopt the proposed policy. She added that park staff that provided input on the document were present to answer any questions.

Mitchell asked where the board was headed with the policy and what they hoped to accomplish? Niernberger said it was to establish a policy for park staff to follow; maximize use of native plant species; and minimize use of pesticides. She recommended that the proposed concept be implemented on a small basis to begin with; say two to three parks. She asked if staff had any suggestions for demonstration parks/areas. Director Kupper responded that staff would develop a recommended list for Board review at the next meeting. He commented that approval of the policy would also be an opportunity to educate the public on the impact pesticides have on the environment.

There was discussion concerning the sentence on justifying the use of non-native plants in any public property development. Mitchell asked who would provide that justification? Staff mentioned the City's use of outside consultants for roadway, landscape and various other projects; park staff's input on project designs; native plant palettes and grasses; landscape designs that require extensive care and maintenance; irrigation requirements for various plant species; advantages and disadvantages of different turfs for athletic fields; and indigenous

woody plants and shrubs. Tim Martz, Superintendent of the Central Support Division, said he used the book "Woody Plants of Kansas" as a reference because staff was also trying to increase plant diversity in an effort to cut down on parasites and disease. It was suggested that the wording be changed to read, "provide rationale for use of non-native plants in any public development of property."

Responding to a question, Kay Johnson, City Environmental Coordinator, said the Health Department endorsed the proposed policy. She commented that the Health Department was doing what they could to reduce pesticides in ground water run off into streams, rivers and other bodies of water through citizen education and public media. She said they were also trying to address citizen's diverse interests for activities along the Big and Little Arkansas Rivers while at the same time protecting the riverbanks from erosion. There was also brief discussion concerning water quality testing and the expense involved in that procedure.

There was discussion concerning using parks along the river to test the new policy. It was also suggested that "Wichita Wild Habitat" (WWH) areas be used as test areas. Staff commented that WWH areas encompassed a large amount of parkland. Director Kupper added that because bindweed was so extremely invasive, it was necessary to treat it chemically. There was also brief discussion concerning re-entry signage after chemical application and the possible effects on animals, including dogs. It was clarified that all chemicals utilized by staff included label directions on use, federal restrictions, etc., which staff were required to follow. President Bailey suggested that the City's web site be used to advertise the new policy. She also thanked Niernberger and staff for their work on the policy.

On motion by Niernberger, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED to approve the policy and revise the wording to read, "provide rationale for use of non-native plants in any public development of property."

3. **Playground Contract.** Director Kupper reported that the selection committee recommended that the bid for the playground contract be awarded to Athco Playground Company. He said twenty-one parks were included in the bid for approximately \$800,000. He added that all renovations would include the new rubberized playground surfaces. He commented that an additional playground design/build request for proposal would be awarded in May for approximately \$420,000. He said they hoped to include the Grove Park northeast play area in that bid.

Director Kupper commented that bids were received from three top playground design firms and offered board members the opportunity to review the presentation books of each firm. He also briefly reviewed the composition of the selection committee, which included five individuals from outside agencies.

Responding to a question, Director Kupper reported that the rocket in Central Riverside Park was scheduled to be turned into a piece of artwork.

4. **Grove Park Update.** Director Kupper reported that in addition to work on the playground area, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds would also be used to develop the picnic shelters, walkways, drinking fountains and other items. Dey requested that the design team

meet with the northeast group to share their ideas prior to construction. Director Kupper commented that the design team had already been given design parameters. He added that staff was reviewing the “punch list” on work completed by Cornejo and Sons, Inc. at the site. Dey asked about the drainage on the east end of the park by the parking lot.

5. **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds.** Director Kupper briefly reviewed a list of projects that included the following items: floor coatings at McAdams and Woodard Recreation centers; HVAC replacement at McAdams Recreation center; roof replacement at McAdams and Evergreen Recreation centers; tennis court renovation at Woodard, Murdock, Aley and West Douglas Parks, and playground renovation at Fairmount, Woodard, Spruce, Aley, and West Douglas Parks. He said the approximate total for all projects was \$861,000. He also commented that tennis courts would be removed at Schweiter and Lincoln Parks. President Bailey asked that staff provide the Board a list of CDBG projects by City Council District.
6. **Mayor’s Committee for Land.** Director Kupper referred board members to City Council Proceedings dated February 4, 2003, re: Furley Site – Review/Discussion – Furley Site Uses. He commented that due to the current economic situation, the City Council was trying to attract businesses to Wichita. There was brief discussion concerning the Kingsbury site, Brooks Landfill, and Furley site. He concluded by saying that he wanted board members to be aware of the discussion, in the event they were invited to be on the Mayor’s Committee.
7. **Prescribed Burning.** Director Kupper referred board members to a hand out proposal and map which described the area to be burned at Pawnee Prairie Park. He commented that staff would give a presentation to the District Advisory Board (DAB) IV on the burning. It was also suggested that information on the burn be posted on the City’s web site. Mitchell asked about the possibility of burning the flood control channel as opposed to mowing it. He also briefly mentioned the area from the railroad bridge to Kellogg.
8. **Director’s Update.** Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:
 - **Budget.** Commented that the City Council should be discussing the budget department by department at tomorrow’s meeting. Miller asked about replacements for the North and South Superintendent positions. Director Kupper reported that those positions had been put on hold pending the outcome of the budget hearings.
 - **Park Naming.** Stated that staff would be working on an agenda report to go to City Council concerning a naming committee for the proposal to name a park area after Leon Robinson.
 - **C & D Landfill.** Responding to a question, he stated that staff would prepare an agenda report to present the board’s recommendation to the City Council on this issue.
 - **Aviation Festival.** Stated that the Aviation Festival is tentatively scheduled for the week of September 14-21, 2003.
 - **Closure of Nims and Murdock Streets.** Reminded board members of the closure of Nims and Murdock Streets through June 2003.

- Garvey Park Design. Commented that staff would schedule a presentation to the DAB III Board.
- Northeast Baseball. Stated that the City was still waiting to hear from the “Friends of Northeast Baseball” organization concerning site development.

There was also brief mention of the maintenance of the soccer fields at South Lakes Park and whether the department would hold “Job Fairs” for the recruitment of part-time and seasonal employees this year. Director Kupper also referred board members to the new board member list and new City Council District Map.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:45 p.m.

June Bailey, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary